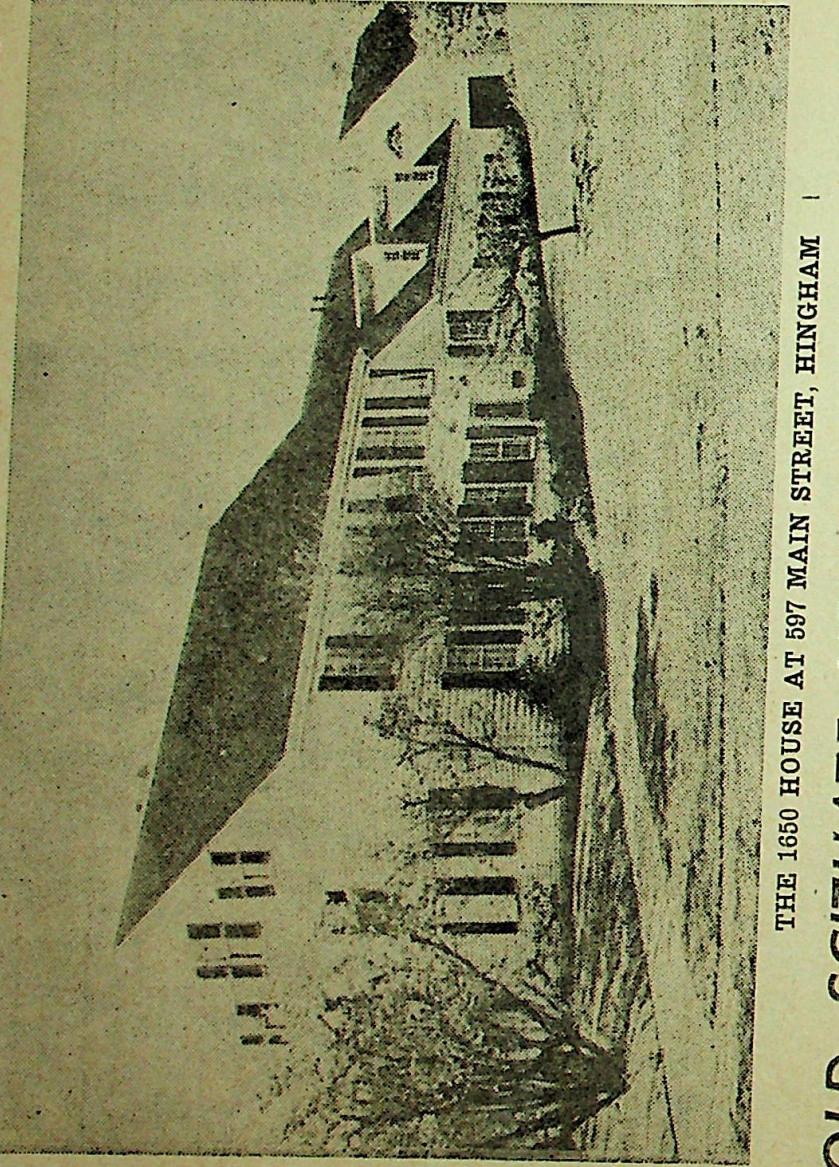


Ancient Mariner, 'Cap'n Bill', Reminiscences



THE 1650 HOUSE AT 597 MAIN STREET, HINGHAM

OLD SCITUATE HERITAGE by William 'Cap'n Bill' Vinal

III

Joshua Wilder and Elijah Damon
Agreement to

"Build me a House and Barn
at Hingham, August 14, 1816"
I, Joshua Wilder agree to furnish
a tall clock to Elijah Damon the
one in my hall upon the comple-
tion of a house and barn on my

lot in Hingham and to furnish
the following articles for its con-
struction: Brick 1200, Lime 4
barls, all lumber except for
frain, all florings, all shingels,
everything needed for the con-
struction of a noble house and
to be in a work man like man-
ner. Nails, dowels, hardware to
be extray.

You to furnish all labor & to
erect the frame. There is to be a
middle post at each end of the
frain & 3 on each side & 4 Beams
and 4 pair Rafters the Biggest
to be Tenantanted in. The post to
be 8½ ft. between joints. The
Rafters & beams you may take a
champer off or not as you like.
The frain they want a week from

next Saturday and Leavitt will
want his Doars at the same time.
You to furnish the doars & doar
fraines, windows & window
fraines. The House to be 51' x 40'.
I furnish the glass. You do all
brick work and plumbing. I to
furnish all lead for flashing and
plumbing. I to have the seller dug
& the stone laid up. Well is al-
ready dug. If I have pillers on
overhang I will pay for them my-
self, but you are to put them in
The fireplaces are to be carefully
made and guaranteed to drawer.
All mantels I will furnish and all
iron Intels. The frain is to be
white oak as follows: (Here ap-
pears a long list of Sel. Beam,
Gints, Posts, Summers, Raft, for
house and barn).

You may make the frains at
Scituate & haul them here. I will
pay you \$30 haulage if you de-
cide to construct at Scituate. I
will pay your bord hear for not
over 36 weeks at not over \$1.25
per week. I will have the write
to supervise the worke & to order
you to discharge any workman I
may deside is not performing in
a work man like manner.

Witness
Stephen Damon
Joshua Damon
Elijah Damon

Additions to above
I agree to keep the clock in re-
pair forever free of charge as long
as we live, but on our deaths this
ends. J. W.

I will bild the shettters at my ex-
pense. E. D.

I will finish the house by June
1, 1817

I will finish the barn by Jan. 1,
1818

I will have a cellar for manure
dug & stoned under the barn
168 x 10' at my expense J. W.

I will pay to \$20 haulage barn
frain
I will pay up to 24 weeks board
xtry for barn work J. W.

I to build a wood sink J. W.

All work extra I will pay for,

but only such extray work as it
not anticipate at present. You
to receive \$1.25 per day for
extray work & Daniel 50c. J. W.
Outside doors & frains & all win-
dows to have 1 coat before in-
stalling. J. W.

I agree to above E. D.

Hare to be furnished by me J.W.
NOTES: This is an amazing docu-
ment Elijah is to enjoy the tick-
ing of a grandfather clock made
by the inventive genuity of Josh-
ua Wilder. A Wilder grandfather
clock today is valued at consider-
able over \$1000. Clock linkers use
to travel the Scituate country-
side plying their trade. We are
waiting for a clock mender at the
present time, but probably in
vain. That Wilder clocks tick to-
day is a great testimony to hon-
est skilful workmanship.

It would be of great interest,
nearly a hundred and forty years
ago, to have listened to Joshua
and Elijah addressing each other
about additions to the agreement,
especially when Elijah said "How
can I keep that clock a going: I
pray that, out of your great skill,
you will fix it." Quoth Joshua,
the Quaker, who knew the me-
chanical durability of the con-
trapition: "I will go a leetle fur-
ther, and keep ye clock in repair
forever." The use of the word
"drawer" is of interest. Phonetic-
ally it probably referred to draft
or draught. The word draw must
have an interesting history. We
draw out in speech, the calf
draws a cow dry, we draw (vice-
rate) fowl, we play draw games,
etc. Elijah and Joshua under-
stood each other when they
agreed to make the chimney
"drawer."

WHO WAS JOSHUA WILDER?

Joshua Wilder (Dec. 1786-d.
Oct. 3, 1860), a contemporary of
Elijah Damon, was the fifth gen-
eration of Wilders in Hingham.
Edward Wilder, the original set-
tler, received a grant of 10 ac.
in 1637. He also owned land be-
tween Town's Bridge and Wilder's
Bridge on Main Street, South
Hingham. December 1, 1675, Ed-
ward was one of sixteen Hingham

soldiers in King Philip's War. Edward
died October 18, 1690.

Joshua Wilder was one of twenty
children, all born in the same
house.* His ancestors were farm-
ers. His father Edward, was Cap-
tain of a military company. Joshua
Wilder was an apprentice to

John and Calvin Bayley of Han-
over. He concluded his apprenticeship
in about 1807. In 1812 he mar-
ried Judith Shearman. They

had seven children. Ezra, born in
1819 carried on his father's work
of manufacturing and repairing

clocks, timepieces, and watches.

Joshua's "Cape Cod" house, in
which his children were born and

he died, was built in 1816 by
Elijah Damon. We have already
seen that Elijah was paid in part
by a tall clock." On July 1, 1820

Joshua sold Elijah one wall clock
for \$35.00, July 31, 1831 he rented
Elijah a watch, — "Rental of a
man's watch for 9 months."

According to a deed, Edward
Wilder of Hingham in considera-
tion of \$248 sold "A pease of
land on the southeast corner of
My Home land with a shop stand-
ing their on bounded as follows:
Beginning at the South east cor-
ner of the shop and running with
the shop and fence westerly six
rods fourteen feet & 3 inches to
the Southeast corner of the
school house" etc. This was
signed 13 February, 1812.

Another document of interest
is as follows: "Know All Men
by These Presents, that we Allen
Cushing Housewright and Laban
Cushing Hatter, both of Hingham,
in Consideration of \$310 paid by
Joshua Wilder of Hingham afore-
said Clock & Watchmaker convey
unto the said Joshua Wilder his
heirs and assigns forever the
Building to the underpinning
lately owned and occupied as a
store by Seth Cushing Jr de-
ceased standing at the southwest-
erly corner of the late Home-
stead of said deceased, with the
appurtenances, subject however
to the following conditions. Viz
the Building aforesaid shall be
removed off the premises where
it now stands in fifty days from
the date hereof. June 7th 1830.
Book 169 folio 72 Pv. Colton Regr.

Joshua or "Quaker" Wilder had
his shop at what is now 605 Main
Street, South Hingham, between
Friend and High Streets, and
next door to the store. The Cape
Cod house is now occupied by
Mrs. Wilder, widow of Fred S.
Wilder, and a great grandson of
Joshua.

Less than a month before pas-
sing away, Joshua sold to Ezra,
his son, all tools and equipment
for five dollars and other good
services." This Bill of Sale is of
interest in that it shows what a
clock artisan of that day posses-
sed: "All tools — Engines —
Lathe — Files — Forging or
Smithing and Cabinet or Carpen-
ters tools and Grindstones in or
about the shop that he now oc-
cupies, and also my timepiece reg-
ulator in said shop & all partially
manufactured Clock work, or
other manufactured material of
every name or nature now owned
by me in said shop — including
Watch, mainsprings, Hands keys
&c. — with all of my old second
hand watches whether at this
time at my home, or lent, or hired
out abroad" — So Hingham Sept.
10th 1860. Joshua's shop was
moved across the street in about
1904.

It has been of interest to note
that Joshua was a Quaker. Also
he made wooden clocks and
hand watches whicher at this
time at my home, or lent, or hired
out abroad" — So Hingham Sept.
10th 1860. Joshua's shop was
moved across the street in about
1904.

In the Hingham Gazette
February 28, 1828 he has an artic-
cle on Public Schools.

NOTES: These items about Josh-
ua Wilder show one discovery
leads to another. That Joshua
Wilder should pay for the build-
ing of his house with a "tall
clock" is interesting. That his
clocks have stood the test of time
and that his "Baby Grandfather
Clocks", have recently sold for

* Hingham and Scituate were
self-sufficient communities. They
depended on local talent. They
sometimes crossed the line for
"ingenuity." Hingham had a pop-
ulation of 2500 at this time and
their own blacksmiths, shoemak-
ers, tanners, millers, house-
wrights, and batters. Joshua Wil-
der was a man of ingenuity.

* The "1650 House" at 597 Main
Street, Hingham.